

For immediate release

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### **Bike, Walk, n' Roll Week underway at Arden Elementary**

**COMOX VALLEY B.C.** – Arden Elementary is holding Bike, Walk, n' Roll Week as a part of the schools' Active Travel Pilot Program activities. Last spring, Arden was announced as one of 12 schools across the province taking part this year in the Active School Travel Pilot Program.

The school is encouraging families to try out new Walking/Biking School Bus routes and are getting excited for their first ever Wheelie Wednesday on October 5. Students can bring their bike or scooter to school for Wheelie Wednesday to bike around the closed school parking lot at recess and lunch playtimes. The school parking lot is closing from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“Thank you to all parent volunteers for lending your time, energy, and enthusiasm!” said Arden’s Active School Travel Grant co-lead Michelle Honeysett. “It looks like a beautiful week to enjoy some fresh air on the way to school.”

There are some wonderful opportunities to get active on the way to school. Students can enter their name into a contest for some great prizes, to help their class win a pizza party, or to get a mystery prize for joining a Walking School Bus route. Families can find different ways to participate in the fun, whether it is traveling in active ways every day this week, just one day, part way, or one way.

The Active Travel Grant, awarded in January of 2022, has allowed founding members of the Arden Green Team to undergo some important training and to consider the barriers that Arden families face to active school travel. In May, Arden hosted a neighbourhood walk-about safety audit with community officials, such as city councillors, RCMP, Parent Advisory Council parents, students, and SD71 staff, to discuss some of the major infrastructure concerns in the neighbourhood. This collaboration highlighted some much-needed safety concerns and raised awareness of all involved. Through the results of a family survey and the Neighbourhood Walk About, a safety audit conducted collaboratively with district officials, city councillors, RCMP, and parents, the Green Team has begun to address some of these barriers.

Recent infrastructure improvements were fast-tracked by the City of Courtenay after city councillors attended the May walk-about and were able to confidently recommend the

prioritization of safety initiatives on Lake Trail and Cumberland Roads, including new lighted pedestrian crossings and improvements to surrounding School Zone signage.

The Active School Travel (AST) Pilot Program is a pilot initiative led by BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC) and is funded by the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Arden Elementary is putting the wheels in motion for positive changes that will get more students and families active in their travel to and from school.

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### **Learn more:**

Active School Travel Pilot Program: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022TRAN0005-000045>

### **Media Contact**

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Pictured below are the winners of last years Active School Travel contest - made possible by Mountain City Cycle. The second picture is of students walking to Arden in a Waling School Bus this week.



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